

# NYU

## Mentee Story Book

# NYU Alumni Executive Mentor Program

2019-2020  
Mentee Story Book



NYU | Alumni



上海纽约大学  
NYU SHANGHAI

CAREER  
DEVELOPMENT  
CENTER

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### Mentee: Yuqin Bai (NYU Shanghai '22)

Yuqin Bai is a sophomore majoring in Data Science. She participated in the Mentor Program because she had difficulty deciding her major during freshman year. She got inspiration from the program and decided to apply for a Master's program while exploring her interests through research.

### Mentor: Eddie Chen (TANDON '95)

Mr. Chen is currently the Managing Director of EURAZEO PE Fund responsible for China and Asia. Mr. Chen received a MS in Technology Management from New York University Tandon School of Engineering, has a BS in Computer Science from Eastern Michigan University and Fudan University.



**Q: What have you learned from your mentor that you think other students could benefit from hearing as well?**

I was anxious and lost about deciding my major before. I am not sure how my major is going to influence my future career path.

I asked Eddie what are the qualities of applicants that he values the most as an employer. His answer was for entry-level candidates, he would value their professionalism

towards the position; schools and majors are two significant indices; and internship experiences could be a differentiation.

As for deciding a major, the suggestion from Eddie is that you don't have to decide what you are going to work on for the rest of your life now, because life is full of possibilities.

If you do not have a long-term goal, just set a short-term goal for your college. Think about whether you want to go to graduate school or get a job after graduation. I used to take going to graduate school for granted. Eddie's perspective enlightens me to reevaluate this option.

For majors like Law and Philosophy, it is necessary to go to graduate school. For a business major, which is of high applicability, it might be a good idea to get a job first. Because some working experience allows you to track what you're working and figure out your interest field.

If you find that you might need to improve certain skills, then apply for targeted graduate school. As for interdisciplinary majors like Data Science, applying to graduate school for more expertise is recommended. Determine your mind and arrange your rest two to three years in the university well towards this goal instead of vacillating. In this fast-changing age, there will always be different opportunities in your career as long as you have a remarkable ability to adapt and open for changes.

**Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?**

To me, Eddie's open mind and willingness for changes are the most impressive.

From our conversations, I learned that even though fields are different, there are some close relations between his working experiences.

For instance, accomplishing many strategic IT industrial projects in developing countries as the Chief of the Information Technology Group drew his awareness of the importance of finance. His networking also brought some valuable opportunities to him.

However, good opportunities are important but not enough. In his amazing career path, Eddie not only made careful choices but also exerted his efforts. In his words, opportunities will always be in favor of well-prepared people.

**Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the whole academic year?**

Throughout the whole academic year, Eddie's guidance helps me develop a clearer picture of my major and plan the courses that I am going to take in the following semesters.

I've already drawn up my research plan under the help of the professor of Engineering and Computer Science for this summer break.

More importantly, I have a broader perspective towards the word of working. The creation of value

in one's career is related to many aspects like professional competence, teamwork, quality of results, etc. And the job duties are going to change as the position changes and lifelong learning is indispensable.

I really appreciate my mentor Eddie's kindness and willingness to share his experiences and insights, which greatly helps me in many regards. I hope I can also grow into an outstanding alumnus in the future and do the same for someone else in need.

**Mentee: Christina Bowllan (NYU Shanghai '22)**

Christina is a sophomore majoring in Global China Studies. Outside of the classroom, she likes learning Chinese, dancing and sharing her adventures around the world on YouTube and Instagram. Looking for guidance on how she can develop these interests and insights in the journalism industry, Christina applied for the mentor program.

**Mentor: Wei Gu (GSAS' 02)**

Wei, CFA, is a director of corporate communications at Apple, and a former journalist with 18 years of writing and editing experience. Before returning to her hometown Shanghai in late 2016 to join the US tech giant, Wei has worked for top-tier global media in New York, Hong Kong and Shanghai.



**Q: What impressed you most from your mentor?**

Getting to know Wei Gu over the past two semesters has been a wonderful experience.

Even though everyone in the program has been paired with a mentor based on professional interest, our friendship has developed into more than just talking about what career paths I should consider, but

actually getting to know each other as people.

Every time we talk, Wei Gu is genuinely interested in what my life is like in New York City and Shanghai, she wants to know how life is going, and even asks me about my parents and brother.

This has been great because Wei Gu knowing my background and personality has lined a great foundation to talk about career paths because she understands who I am and what projects I should undertake.

**Q: What's something you would like to share with other students?**

Something I learned from Wei Gu that other students can benefit from is that this summer is the perfect opportunity to "think outside the box" and take on a summer project that you probably would not have done normally.

When we look back on this upcoming summer, it seems like students will have been given a bit of leverage when it comes whether or not we were able to secure an internship, so why not take advantage of this and create a Youtube page or make a film based on a topic you have always wanted to explore.

This summer, we need students who are going to help our countries get back to a new normal after the coronavirus situation, and in order to do this, we have to think about more than just getting an internship with a big-time corporation; This summer is one to pave a new path which I am definitely aiming to



do.

**Q: How do you feel about this program?**

This program has been a lot of fun to be a part of. I love how I was able to have a close working connection with Wei Gu and also get to know other mentors within the program such as Theodore and Joshua.

Theodore has been a great mentor to have because he is in the business field, and over we chat conversations and in person meetings, he has shown me how my talents can flourish in his industry. He also was able to connect me with one of his friends that is an NYU alumni so I could speak about summer opportunities at Caixin Global.

Joshua has also been an inspiring mentor to get to know. I remember at the fall dinner he pushed me to try and create a student reporting Youtube channel at NYU Shanghai and he said that he would be more than happy to strategize with me about the process.

This is what the mentor program is about, getting to know successful individuals that want the same for you and that is what I have felt from all of three of these mentors, so I thank them endlessly.



**Mentee: Xilin Chen  
(NYU Shanghai '22)**

Xilin is a sophomore majoring in Business and Finance and Data Science, and he hopes to gain insight into the finance industry, current macroeconomy as well as the work and life in financial service.



**Mentor: Ray Lu  
(Stern '11)**

Ray is a very sophisticated investor in a strategic investment in the technology industry. He graduated from Zhejiang University with a bachelor of computer science and an MBA from Leonard N. Stern School of Business.



**Q: What you have learned from your mentor that you think other students could benefit from hearing as well?**

First of all, I would like to summarize the nice mentorship experience with my mentor, Ray Lu. He is a very sophisticated investor in a strategic investment

in the technology industry.

He provided me his adequate insight into the industry and current macroeconomy, broke my wrong assumptions about work and life in financial service, or as an investment decision-maker, and provided me many powerful suggestions on my future planning.

The most important experience he shared with me during the project is his experience of making a choice between two quite different career paths. With a master degree in Computer Science, he could stay in a tech company as a programmer like many of his classmates and led a much more stable life, however, he bravely choose to restart his career as an investment manager despite the previous years of immersion in the tech industry as he noticed that tech industry and coding jobs do not fit his expectation of life and challenge.

It is very hard to discard all previous achievements and start from scratch at that point, and I feel respect for him for his decisiveness and confidence.

He shared this with me when I turned to him for some suggestions on the choice of internship project. He taught me to be open, try any position regardless of the burden of the external pressure of inner vacillation.

He told me that "you will never know which fits you best before you try, and in terms of time, you are rich enough to afford the try-and-error before you know which career path is the best for you." I

believe that this is imperative for anyone who would like to step into financial, if not any, industry.

**Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the whole academic year?**

I would like to summarize my experience in the Alumni Executive Mentor Program and how it helps me.

To be honest, though the pandemic of COVID-19 has brought up tremendous difficulty in my communication with my mentor in the Spring semester and may undermine the overall quality of the program, the AEMP still helps me a lot during the year.

The program has provided us with not only the connection with experienced professionals but also a community of talented students who are going to pursue the career pathway in the industries.

Besides the benefit we got from the experience with our mentors, the community helps us to discover the shared confusions and worries among us and motivates reciprocity among us. We share our experience and what we have learned in the project with each other and forge a strong connection between the mentees, even during the time of separation.

**Mentee:  
Antonia Leiva Crossley  
(NYU Shanghai '22)**

Antonia is a sophomore majoring in Business and Finance. She has studied in different countries such as the US, Chile, Ireland and now China. She applied to the mentor program because she was wondering which track she should follow in the business field.

**Mentor: Michael Mi  
(Stern MBA' 00)**

Michael is currently with Intel managing its global key account - Tencent. He had diverse experiences in investment, BD and sales in TMT verticals. Michael also had experience in media industry where he headed for business development for Sun Seven Stars Entertainment & Media Group.



**Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the whole academic year?**

I like this program as it encourages me to look beyond classes, to focus not only in grades but more in working experience, and the importance of looking these years of undergraduate more deeply into finance, taking the courses seriously and looking for job opportunities in my sophomore year, so then, I can start building a network and also

looking for what passionate me.

I didn't have the opportunity of a second meeting with Michael. However, I will always appreciate his advice and commitment to the program.

In our first meeting, I was kind of confused on how to get more involved in the financial sector. He advised me to take Finance courses like Corporate finance, and also into looking for an internship and get involved in the working environment.

Thanks to his advice I feel more confident about what steps to take further on.

**Q: What's your mentor's suggestion and how do you put it into practice?**

In fall 2019, as a sophomore, I started to take the finance courses, as my mentor suggested in our first meeting.

At the beginning of January 2020, the Coronavirus was spreading around China, so I was relocated to study abroad in NYU London. In this time, I started to look for internships in the finance industry as Michael, my mentor, suggested to me.

Also, I met some good friends from NYU Abu Dhabi, who were already doing internships in consulting firms in London, and they helped me to find interesting opportunities.

However, in March 2020, we were all sent home as the Coronavirus was spreading all over the world. I



was disappointed, but I think this is a good time to think and plan calmly for our future which will be more about adaptation and challenges.

**Q: What do you want to say to our future candidates for this program?**

I would like to recommend this Program to all freshmen and sophomores.

It is a unique opportunity that helps you to see your career path and teaches you what steps to take on this journey.

For example, many of us feel some kind of loss when we have to decide our major, or like me, I knew I wanted to major in business, but I was indecisive between marketing or Finance.

Thanks to the mentoring I got from the program I was able to decide between these two fields, and I feel confident with my decision.

Even though I participated in this program during a Global Pandemic, the advice of my mentor will always be appreciated and useful to continue in my career path.



**Mentee: Liancheng Gong  
(NYU Shanghai '22)**

Liancheng is a student majoring in data science with a focus on Artificial Intelligence. She hopes to study Business Analytics in graduate school and work in the data-related business industry.

**Mentor: Lei Yao  
(Stern '15)**

Lei studied Business Analytics in NYU Stern and worked in the financial industry as the head of marketing and communication.



**Q: What you have learned from your mentor that you think other students could benefit from hearing as well?**

When coming to what I've learned from my mentor, the way of thinking and her attitude impresses me a lot. For the second online meeting, we talked about the current situation and some reflections based on Coronavirus.

First and foremost, we should keep reflecting on ourselves and the situation we are facing. Considering the current online study and remote working, we may reflect on some disadvantages that can be improved such as the inconvenience of assigning small tasks and communicating with colleagues.

We may also reflect on the benefits of adjustments and experiences according to such a situation, which can be reserved in the future.

For example, online working prevents us from being distracted by extra noise and disturbance. We could stay focused and improve our efficiency by creating our own working environment. What's more, when fully mastering our time, we can maximize the value of every minute. Under such circumstances, we can jump out of the limitations set by the school and the restrictions of the block of time so that we are able to think from broader perspectives instead of continuous running forward.

Secondly, uncertainty is a certainty so that you should always be fully prepared before something occurs. We shouldn't take the fluke mind. Once something unexpected happens such as being infected by the coronavirus, no matter how low the percentage among the crowd becomes one hundred percent to you.

In other words, the consequences may be severe. Sometimes, we can hardly feel the awkwardness those people (or Wuhan) are facing, but the future is unknown. In terms of the current progress, only if other provinces and cities carry out comprehensive protection, can we prevent such uncertainties from spreading.

Nothing is certain except uncertainty. Therefore, we need to always be prepared for the risk controlling and those uncertainties.

In addition to being fully prepared,

we also need to accept everything as soon as possible after something occurs.

External environments may affect individuals and we have no choice but to accept it. As long as we could learn something from the event, which may be helpful for the future, the event to some extent can be called meaningful. The happy and the disaster are in together at any time so that we should accept it with a normal attitude.

The earlier we accept it and transfer our attitude, the greater benefits we will achieve. Sometimes we need to stick to our own principles; but sometimes, we also need to adjust to those uncertainties.

We are now witnessing the progress of history on the greatest scale of working and studying at home as well as the plummeting stock prices. Instead of complaining and worrying about it, we should embrace all the varieties and learn from those events.

**Q: How do you feel about this program?**

When talking about the whole program, it's definitely helpful for me. Lei is not only like an instructor who can give me lots of suggestions and inspiration when I am confused about my future plan but also like a friend who is willing to listen to me.

I really appreciate this Mentor program offering such great opportunities to communicate with excellent alumni and hope that our friendship will continue.

**Mentee: Suqing Gu  
(NYU Shanghai '22)**

Suqing is a sophomore majoring in Business and Finance. She was wondering what kind of career path she should pursue and how she can balance her personal interests and academic life. Thus, she turned into her mentor for some suggestions.

**Mentor: Joshua Fu  
(Stern' 03)**

Joshua is the founder of HOIC Group. He speaks four languages and was raised in New York, London, HK, Tokyo, and Shanghai. He has over fifteen years of investment and IP value identification/creation/extension experience in Fashion, Luxury, Art, Design, Media, F&B and Hospitality, having achieved iconic successes in many categories.



**Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?**

I was impressed by his curiosity and passion for the world.

Josh is a great person who is always optimistic about the world and really enjoys everything he is doing. He can speak at least 4 languages, and he is really interested in the education and art field. So what he is doing about the education and art innovations definitely fits his interest.

When he told me, "just do whatever you like, finding what you like is not easy and enjoy your life!" I was so inspired by his motto. We are so similar in that we are outgoing and always energetic.

I hope I can figure out what I really like through 4 years' liberal arts education and devoted to doing what I enjoy.

**Q: What you have learned from your mentor that you think other students could benefit from hearing as well?**

He gave me a lot of suggestions for public speaking. The first thing is to slow down, no matter in Chinese or English. The first step to help you calm down is to slow down.

In addition, prepare some notes ahead of time to leave more time for thinking instead of feeling anxious then.

As to the Q&A session after a lecture or a speech, Josh suggested that "You can write down or type what you want to ask, maybe not all, just some keywords. And when you finish this, just speak out instead of continuing to think about modifying it. You may easily fall into the trap of overthinking or over-analyzing, so be prepared, but don't think too much".

**Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the whole academic year?**

I have been benefiting from this program for a whole year.

In the first session, I told him my



concerns such as public speaking and lack of confidence in speaking English, so he gave me some suggestions and I tried to follow what he said and thus overcome my fear.

In the second session, I told him about the progress I have made and got more positive feedback. For example, He figured out that my speaking pace got much slower this time and gave me much praise and encouragement. And he gave more suggestions on my body language and eye contact part which I can work on later.

Due to the special virus situation, for the second session, we had an interesting online talk, we shared our opinions about the influence of the virus all over the world. He gave me more insights into the virus on the education innovation and art field.

What he said was interesting and made me think about different ideas that I haven't thought about at all. I really appreciate that he could broaden my horizons and give me so many useful suggestions.



### **Mentee: Delin Guo (NYU Shanghai '22)**

Delin Guo is a sophomore majoring in Business and Finance. He is strongly interested in pursuing a career in consulting and he joined this Mentor Program for advice from former consultants.

### **Mentor: Daniel Li (Stern MBA '04)**

Daniel Li currently works as the senior Finance Director at PepsiCo, responsible for driving China's business growth. Prior to that, Daniel worked at McKinsey, supporting clients on various strategic problems. Daniel earned his Master of Business Administration degree from Stern School of Business.



#### **Q: What's something you would like to share with other students?**

One of the most valuable advice Daniel gave me is to find what kind of role I wish to be in the future.

"Nowadays, few people would stick to their very first job for the lifetime, so it is important for you to know your long term goal as well as your short term goal which can help you achieve the long term one".

This is something that can apply to everyone, for me, I think a long-term plan does not have to be made for

decades.

A 3-5 year plan would be helpful enough, making a plan can let you know what skills or qualifications that you are currently missing and what is the timeline to get prepared.

#### **Q: What impressed you the most from your mentor?**

"All in for what you really want". Simple words, but powerful. And that's the answer I get when I ask about whether there is a Plan B for me besides consulting.

He told me he can see my passion about consulting and the progress I have made and will make.

I am probably not the best candidate in the final round of interview, I was told, but if I am willing to dedicate 100% while others have a plan B and only give out 80% or even less, I can beat them.

#### **Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the whole academic year?**

Overall, this program offers me an opportunity to get connected with an expert in his field, and it is not like simple networking.

Mentors all have solid experience to give us some suggestions from a considerate perspective.



### Mentee: Xinyao Han (NYU Shanghai' 22)

Xinyao is a sophomore double majoring in Finance and Data Science, she is interested in hearing experiences and insights from a professional in PE and investments for career pursuit.



### Mentor: Gloria Song (Stern '07)

Gloria has been active in the China Finance Market for over 20 years, and especially has expertise in fundraising, investments and portfolio management.



#### Q: What's your mentor's suggestion and how do you put it into practice?

To keep the pressure level within control, one can go for hobbies to release stress, for example, playing the piano, drawing, and reading, whatever things that can give you inner peace and make you temporarily feel released.

While it's not a long-term solution, anxiety and pressure will come back from time to time. One important thing to do is to find the practice you are excelled at, which could support you and give you confidence whenever you complete it.

It could be programming, time managing, or doing math. Let this practice bring you a sense of achievement and satisfaction, it could help lower the pressure level.

To apply these rules into daily lives, she told me not to panic when faced with too many tasks, I could first deal with things that I'm excellent at, and focus on two or three things at one time, and when I'm accustomed to the current pressure level, I could gradually add more things to the to-do lists. It's a process and there's no need to hurry.

#### Q: What you have learned from your mentor that you think other students could benefit from hearing as well?

I have asked Gloria for suggestions for us students who were at an early stage building business senses. Gloria suggests that we can read reports from famous companies such as McKinsey, and research reports from CMBC and Bloomberg. In the period of building one's own knowledge system, don't read Wechat posts from self-medias.

We can try to read some books about the entire process of economic and financial events, which are more vivid and systematic, and we can learn what is the chain reaction.



In fact, we can find some specific incidental events and read them first. Firstly, it tells a story and thus is readable compared to financial news; secondly, it is better to sort out the consequences and logic behind. For one to think independently, one can start with classical books about finance. Book recommendation lists from Bill Gates and Zuckerberg are good sources to choose from.

I wondered how to find the most suitable career and how can I be sure that a certain career is right for me. Gloria also gave me some useful advice.

Find the things that you are passionate about and keep a devoted interest for it. That's the secret.

First of all, this practise should be something you're definitely interested in, and you have an undying passion for it. Secondly, It's better to have talent in this practice. Gloria says that you don't need excess talent, but talent is necessary. Lastly, you have to take a look at the results, if the results show that your produced work is better than the average person's, then it will be enough.

This practice will be the "something" that can support you throughout your whole life. Things that are worth sticking to are those that make you happy and can become the support for your life.

**Q: How is your meeting with your mentor?**

Gloria is a very attentive, sincere, wise and supportive mentor, she would often give me valuable suggestions based on my own situations and I could share my worries and confusion with her.

During our first meeting, we mostly focused on life planning, relationships, friends and families. At that time, I was perplexed and at a lost about my future, and Gloria patiently listened to my confusion and gives valuable advice based on not only her experiences but real situations.

During our second meeting, we discussed how to make the most efficient decision in times of uncertainty and how to cultivate business sense. Her words would often enlighten me and open up a whole new outlook of examining my confusions and struggles.

Her suggestions led my way throughout the 19-20 academic year and I believe will continue in the future. It's such a great thing to get to connect with Gloria.

## Mentee:Wenye Jiang (NYU Shanghai '22)

Wenye is a sophomore studying Math and Data Science, and she hopes to hear from stories and advice in the quantitative finance industry.

## Mentor: Guoyao Wu (Tandon '10)

Guoyao studied financial engineering at NYU and started a partnership doing investment based on quantitative strategies.



**Q: What impressed you the most from your mentor?**

During the meetings with my mentor, he impressed me a lot by his academic experiences, successful career path and his attitudes towards career and life.

He studied financial engineering at NYU and got almost straight A's in all the courses. Yet he was not arrogant about his excellent academic performance. He mentioned that what NYU gave to him included all the culture and atmosphere there, as well as encountering different people from diverse backgrounds.

This impressed me a lot since he focused not only on the academic part of life in NYU, but also attribut-

ed great significance to the cultural part, showing a multi-dimensional scope towards university life.

His successful career path also impressed me a lot. He started a partnership doing investment based on quantitative strategies. It proved to perform really well. However, when he talked about this, he attributed the success partly to his good luck.

I think this presents not only his modesty towards achievements but also that he always keeps in mind the transient feature of the financial market and is always ready for ups and downs.

**Q: What's something you would like to share with other students?**

A point he mentions is that if you are talented enough or well-prepared enough in a career, you should really let your employers know that at the very beginning.

He says that he thinks most Chinese students are likely to be so shy or modest that they will not talk about their excellence even if they actually process talent and skills. He thinks that it is important to let the employers know your exact talent by talking to them directly about what you can manage to do, otherwise the employer might not know your level and might give you tasks easier than you have expected.

I find this suggestion very useful because I also think that Chinese students have some modesty which is rooted deep inside our cultural background. This is mostly good characteristics but sometimes it could cause some troubles.

So, we need to bear in mind that confidence and frank expression of our own abilities and skills are to help us balance the modesty which may hide our real skills.

**Q: How do you feel about this program?**

All this knowledge and understanding I got from my mentor benefited me a lot. Through the meetings, I became more familiar with and interested in financial engineering, and I plan to do some research on quantitative finance if possible.

I feel really grateful to the NYU Alumni Executive Mentor Program and hope it can continue to benefit future NYU students.



**Mentee: Ruby Kim  
(NYU Shanghai '22)**

Ruby is a sophomore majoring in Interactive Media and Business. She plans to start her career in the hospitality industry. She applied for this Mentor Program for guidance and advice.



**Mentor: Derrick Miu  
(Stern MBA '03)**

Derrick is currently working at Merck & Co. Inc. and has over 22 years of experience in the pharmaceutical industry spanning the 3 largest markets US, Japan and China. He completed his Bachelors of Science from Columbia University and his Masters of Business Administration from New York University.



**Q: What's something you would**

**like to share with other students?**

I'd like to quote a sentence from my mentor, "Try to think how do I find the right company I want to work for and target them, instead of thinking how do I sell myself to the companies to stand out."

Those words really were a refreshing shock because I had been thinking about what kind of 'marketing strategy' would be appealing to recruiters.

This has changed my perspective on how I view the career market and the way I should promote myself.

**Q: What impressed you the most from your mentor?**

Every two or three years, he changes his job or geographies, trying new things. And he grows and also knows what he doesn't like.

He made me understand that by trying more jobs, you might not know what exactly you want to do, but you can find out what you absolutely do not want to do. It's never a commitment that you cannot never undo. In technology we have this idea called "Fail Fast and Fail Forward".

If you try something new, and you find you don't like it, cut it short. But at least you are learning, then you fail forward.

**Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the program?**

Throughout the whole year, my mentor has not only been my ca-

reer advisor but my mental supporter.

I have always felt secure as I had a figure who eagerly supports me on the back side.

My mentor, who always keeps trying to challenge himself, has been my motivation in my life.



### **Mentee: Yuxuan Li (NYU Shanghai '22)**

Yuxuan is majoring in Honors Math, she hopes to hear about life and career advice from extraordinary alumni and build her connections with them.

### **Mentor: Crystal Gao (Stern '10)**

Crystal Gao is a senior Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) member, recently joined Lightspeed China, as CFO.



#### **Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?**

One thing about Crystal that impresses me most is the bravery of facing the challenges and changes in her life.

Crystal was a supervisor in McKinsey for years but she accepted a new job of Lightspeed in 2019. She told me that the new environment is challenging and a little disturbing. She spent less time with her family, especially her lovely kids. And sometimes she had to answer a work call during her vacation.

Despite all those disturbing things, she told me that she never regrets, and she believes that all the disturbances are just temporary. It keeps me thinking of stepping out of my comfort zone and pushing myself into a new environment, because I know the more you achieved in the zone, the harder you step out of it. But Crystal really inspires and encourages me to seize the opportunity and devote myself to something new and worthwhile.

#### **Q: What's the biggest take away you hope to share with other students?**

One thing I think can benefit every college student or young professional is that never hesitate to ask for help.

I was afraid of acting stupid in front of my employers and professors, especially asking questions. Crystal encourages me to talk to the professors and employers about it. She thinks that a good talk is to ask valuable questions, the ones that you think through carefully.

An employer may not be happy to answer the question that can be answered by just googling, and they expect to hear your thoughts and progress on that. Once they see it, they are glad to elaborate and answer your question, because in this process they not only answer your question but also know you better.

Crystal believes that the key is communication, whether you are a student or professional, good communication can always make things easier because everything involves dealing with people.



**Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the program?**

Thanks to Crystal and the program, I have learned things that no college can teach me. Talking to crystal inspires me of all the possibilities of my life in the future.

Talking to experienced professionals always gets my head out of the p in my current trouble and pressures and rethinks what all those struggles are for. Besides, Crystal helps me with my social skills and prepares me for my future potential life.

The most important thing is that Crystal and I build a friendship which is impossible for me without this program.



**Mentee: Cinny Lin  
(NYU Shanghai '22)**

Cinny Lin is a sophomore majoring in Data Science. She joined the program because she was struggling to figure out which concentration to study. With the guidance of mentor Alfred Wong, she decided to keep her Artificial Intelligence concentration and take Finance electives.



**Mentor: Alfred Wong  
(Stern MBA '94)**

Mr. Alfred Wong is the President of Chaco Development (HK) Ltd., a member of the Taiwan based Chailease Group. He has over 20 years of experience in M&A and private equity.



**Q: What impressed you the most from your mentor?**

Mr. Wong is extremely chill and calm, even in times like this coronavirus pandemic and economic recession. That is what impresses me the most.

Keep on and carry on. Mr. Wong shared how his colleagues were concerned about whether they should adjust their annual budget and other financial decisions.

But Mr. Wong said there is no need to do it this early. Everything is developing rapidly now, and no one is quite sure how exactly the economy is going. Even if you adjust the budget now, it is likely that you would still need to adjust again later.

It is better if we just sit and wait until things are more clear and stable to start making adjustments.

I think this is a very interesting attitude to have in businesses and a very special learning experience.

**Q: What you have learned from your mentor that you think other students could benefit from hearing as well?**

Quite the opposite from keeping calm and sitting back, another trait Mr. Wong has is to take action and learn through practice.

I remember that in our last meeting, I mentioned to him that I am really interested in finance but don't really know where to start.

He gave me the advice that I can start from doing investments. Try to invest in something. Once you put money into it you would care about it.

After that, it is learning through doing and accumulating experience. I didn't really know what he meant by that and how I could actually in-

vest at the time.

Until recently, because the coronavirus pandemic brought the world into another economic recession, a few friends and I decided to take this opportunity to make some investments.

**Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the whole academic year?**

The biggest benefit for me is to know what major I would like to do.

Having Mr. Wong as my mentor, I had an in-depth understanding about finance and what the job is like working in that field.

By the time we had our second meeting, I was pretty determined that I wanted to major in Data Science but still not sure if I wanted to concentrate in Finance.

He said he's happy that I finally made progress, but that I also don't need to settle there. Keep looking for options and try to learn as much as possible.

Declaring my major should not be an end, but a beginning. Learn about how data science can be applied in finance. Look into FinTech. There is still a lot to learn.



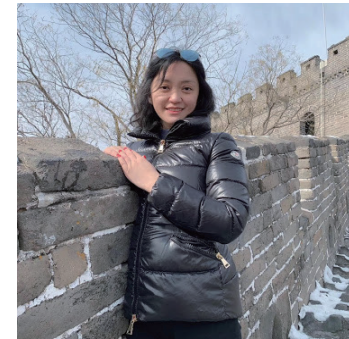
**Mentee: Jonathan Lin  
(NYU Shanghai '22)**

Jonathan is a sophomore majoring in social science. He plans to attend law school in the United States. He attended this program to explore more about the law industry. He is debating whether he should go into International Law or Technology Law.



**Mentor: Stephanie Tang  
(TANDON '95)**

Stephanie Tang is a Hong Kong based lawyer that is currently a partner at Hogan Lovells. She specializes in mergers and acquisitions and has won numerous awards for her abilities and results.



**Q: What have you learned from your mentor that you think other students could benefit from hear-**

**ing as well?**

One thing she told me that really stood out was her response when I asked: "What makes a good lawyer?"

I was expecting some response about being able to think critically and logically, but instead, she told me that one of the first things that makes a good lawyer is being a good person. And that makes so much sense to me because law is a profession that is trying to help people.

Lawyers tackle the complex rules in our society and help everyday people traverse through paragraphs of the law. Lawyers are there to serve the community and it makes sense that those of which are inherently making better lawyers.

I think this applies to not only lawyers but also to many other careers. In America, business executives often get a lot of criticism for being greedy and generally too competitive, but if we think about it, those who are inherently good are usually those who are still around a decade from now.

Take for example Tesla, it is a company based on a goal to further humanity and not solely on profits.

**Q: What impressed you the most from your mentor?**

I think one of the first things that really impressed me about my mentor was her ability to answer my questions with such grace and simplicity.

She was able to explain clearly complex processes like what she does at work, how she works, and other aspects of the lawyering world to me, someone who has had no practical experience with the law profession.

I appreciated her ability to simplify concepts so that I could follow along with her in an informative conversation.

**Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the whole academic year?**

This program has definitely helped me contextualize what a lawyer does and is.

After my talks with Stephanie, I can say with confidence that I really do want to go to law school and be a lawyer.

I also have a clearer view of the steps that are required from me to go the distance and actually become a lawyer.

I thought that this program was one of the best that NYUSH has to offer. It gave us a lot of freedom and helped us meet with those of whom are already successful in our prospective careers.

It really helps us lost college students start to visualize what it really means and how to be successful in the career field of our dreams.

The only suggestion to improve this program in the future is just to try to get more alumni onboard so that more students could get into this program. This program was so

helpful and I just wish that more students could have enjoyed the benefits of the program.

Obviously getting more alumni to join is no easy task, but I believe that with time this will just be a natural development because helping our alma mater comes naturally with us.

I know in the future I would definitely be interested in joining this program as a mentor to be able to share what I have learned to all of the students.

## Mentee: Liqiang Luo (NYU Shanghai '22)

Liqiang is a math sophomore in NYU Shanghai. He is considering pursuing a career in the financial industry, which is one of the reasons why he joined this program.



## Mentor: Mark Yang (CIMS '99)

Mark Yang is the Managing Director of First Rainbow Ltd. and Yueyang Kai-meite Electronic and Specialty Rare Gases Ltd.. He used to built a \$30 million dollar premium specialty gases and chemical business in Shanghai from scratch within ten years. He is an expert in China and Asia business development.



**Q: What's something you would like to share with other students?**

One thing I learned from Mark and I

think other students can also benefit is thinking realistically.

Since most of us spend the majority of their time in study and are not familiar with the real industry and career.

It's very common for us to think about those questions far from the actual. During the freshman year, we may be not sure about which major we will take.

Then as a sophomore, many of us would like to say, "I have made up my mind and I'll stick to it". However, in most cases, the outside world is changing rapidly itself.

To adapt to the changes and find what we are fond of, we need to think realistically. What is realistic? The things we've experienced, and the things we've felt from the experience.

So, when we are still wondering about different choices, maybe taking the first step is the best choice. Only after we have tried, we can tell if we like that or not. Because we are still young and energetic, don't be afraid of trying.

**Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the program?**

Throughout the whole academic year in this program, I have determined my major and have a rough idea of what I want to learn and what I want to do in the future.

More importantly, I got to know some new people and have more understanding of the industry.

Those help me a lot when choosing the courses I want to take as well as the site for study away.

Under the influence of this program, I decided to choose many courses that don't satisfy major. The reason why I choose them is that I want to explore more about different areas and acquire more knowledge and skills.

I think they are all helpful for my academic, they make my academic life wider and richer.

**Q: How is your meeting with your mentor?**

Mark is very good at pushing forward the conversation. In the first meeting with him, I was a little bit nervous.

However, Mark is very talkative and bring up topics that are interesting for both of us.

Meanwhile, whenever I express my doubts about my current situation, he would explain to me very patiently.

Sometimes, he shared me with his experience and told me to be optimistic and positive about the changes which will happen in the approaching future.

Our conversations are very relaxed and I don't feel nervous or stressed in our following meeting.

Hence, every time our talk would last for several hours and I will be guided in all directions during those hours.

**Mentee: Olivia Olek  
(NYU Shanghai '22)**

Olivia Olek is a sophomore at NYU Shanghai majoring in Business and Marketing with a focus in accounting and minor in Chinese. She would like to join the program to gain insightful experience that can help launch her career as well as practice professionalism.



**Mentor: Andy Xia  
(Stern '12)**

Andy Xia is the vice president of Nexus Point Capital. He has rich experience in private equity and investment banking in Greater China.



**Q: What impressed you the most from your mentor?**

Andy has accomplished so much already in the beginning years of his ca-

reer and has expressed immense amounts of self-growth, too.

For example, he constantly reminded me that the other half of being successful is integrity.

He emphasized that no matter what stage you are at in your career, it is imperative that you continue to surround yourself with leaders, co-workers, and mentors that motivate you and follow the same moral compass as you.

Additionally, he stressed the importance of not being afraid to make mistakes. In his words, "Don't be afraid of making mistakes, no one gets it right on the first try.

Be bold in correcting yourself, have the courage to do that. You might think you know it all, but you don't, and there's nothing wrong with that!" Just because you got the job at a leading firm or a start-up does not mean you know everything about the industry.

The time to learn never passes, instead every day is a new opportunity to learn more!

**Q: What's something you would like to share with other students?**

Andy and I had several conversations about my struggles, concerns, and aspirations of my future career, and his responses were very eye-opening.

He was straightforward in expressing that choosing a career based on financial success only distances you from reaching your full potential.



His explanation follows, "It should be something you have a passion for and something you can see yourself having a long career in."

Of course, you will still have to work hard but make sure you would be willing to get through the difficult side of things.

Financial success comes from putting a lot into it. You know yourself the best regarding your interests and strengths, and really take those into account before committing to a major, internship, and career you have no passion for."

I found this very helpful because, at the current stage of my college career, I am approaching the time to pursue a major, internships, and narrow down my desired career field.

While a high salary can be a motivating factor, it is not worth it if you would be miserable in your line of work for 30+ years.

I am very appreciative of this piece of advice and think other students should consider this too because they will also face the decision of picking a career.

### **Mentee: Mengjie Shen (NYU Shanghai '22)**

Mengjie is a sophomore majoring in Computer Science while hoping to know more about the area of Finance and to have someone who could give me some useful suggestions on life plannings.

### **Mentor: Alan Li (Stern '06)**

After a five-year stint in business technology consulting, Alan pursued an MBA at Stern and returned to work in investor relations in Finance.



### **Q: What you have learned from your mentor that you think other students could benefit from hearing as well?**

Alan gave me a lot of useful advice regarding the academic plan and career plan.

For example, he brought up a theory in our first meeting that "The income of different types of jobs is like a normal distribution. The industry such as CS or accounting is placed in the middle of that distribution. This means that most likely, you will have a decent income. However, subjects such as history are placed on either the beginning or the end of the distribution, which means that you either not having a job or becoming very successful.

This depends on your talent or your family background."

Moreover, he encourages me to ask for rotation while interning to gain more knowledge about the industry and your work.

### **Q: What impressed you most from your mentor?**

As a college student, it's easy for me to be trapped by the short-term's gain and loss. However, after hearing the life story of my mentor, I was inspired to view things from a relatively long-term perspective. For example, he mentioned that he spent a lot of time learning CS in his college life. However, after graduation, he took the work in the Finance industry, which made him feel that his time spent on CS is a waste. He is also less advantaged than his colleague in knowledge about Finance because of this.

However, right now, his work in Li Fung is something related to digital data. His knowledge of Computer Science gives him more insight than his peers in Finance. Sometimes, I hesitate about my future choice worrying that whether a wrong choice leads me to a wrong path, however, after hearing his stories, it gives me another perspective that there is no wrong decision or wrong path.

Everything that I have been through or will go through will pay back in a certain way in the future. Also when I am viewing the value of certain things, it would be better if I consider its long term's value.

**Q: How do you feel about this program?**

The original purpose for me to apply for this program is to have someone who could give me some useful suggestions on choosing majors, choosing the study away sites, choosing courses, etc. However, as the program went on, I found that this is only a part of the experience. I gained much more.

I have gained a lot of new perspectives on viewing my life while hearing about his life experience. Talking with someone that is older than you and has a completely different life experience can help you see your life in a bigger picture. During the second meeting, instead of making it a form of simply asking him for advice, I tended to make it a mutual conversation of exchanging our thoughts.

I believe that having a conversation with someone that has a completely different life path can help me gain a new perspective on a certain issue. It gives me the inspiration of seeing the situation I am facing with another angle. It's an interesting talk to reflect on myself as well as hearing some new thoughts.

I feel lucky to be chosen by my mentor and it's a great journey of learning from him and exchanging our thoughts.



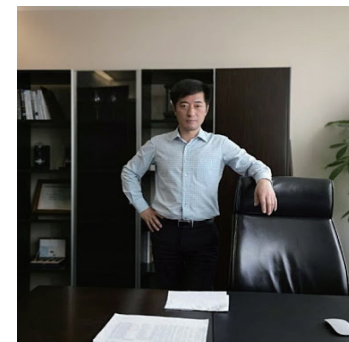
**Mentee: Xiaoyan Tang  
(NYU Shanghai '22)**

Xiaoyan Tang is a sophomore majoring in Mathematics. She is very interested in the finance industry. She joined the Mentor Program for guidance and advice.



**Mentor: Wayne Lee  
(Stern '03)**

Wayne Lee has worked in the global investment sector for over a decade, mainly dealing with financial regulatory bodies including the SEC in the US, the SFC in Hong Kong, and the CSRC in China. His areas of expertise include public listing and offering, regulatory compliance. Organizations he has been a part of include Morgan Stanley, CIBC, Citigroup, Credit Suisse, Macquarie Capital, and BOC International.



**Q: What impressed you the most from your mentor?**

Wayne assisted me in setting up a positive attitude towards networking and socializing by sharing his own stories.

To help me overcome my fear of reaching out to strangers, we conducted many mock reaching-out practices, including self-introduction, career interest, and internship experience sharing.

His evaluations from the perspective of a professional provide me with great access to the core soft skills of conducting successful interviews.

With these useful practices, I am making progress in conducting interviews confidently and logically.

**Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the whole academic year?**

Wayne not only helps me establish my career path step by step but also brings about some positive changes to my personality and soft skills. My communication with Wayne reconstructed my preconceived image of elites in the financial industry. They are more willing to reach out to grab new opportunities for themselves.

As a person who is not so sociable and outgoing, Wayne's story inspires me to pursue some self-growth in personality. My most cherished possession from this program is the friendship that I developed with Wayne.

Besides the mentor and mentee relationship, we treat each other as close partners who can always motivate each other. I always share my academic progress with him, while he keeps me updated about his new ideas and understanding of his work and his life.

This special friendship offers me great help when I get confused by the different voices around me. Every time we chatted on WeChat, Wayne always says, I am always here. He is patient to answer any of my questions, to help me with any type of difficulty. This mentor program may end, but the friendship will not.

Throughout this whole academic year, I followed Wayne's advice to think about my career path, to push myself to reach out bravely, to become more confident and outgoing.

This mentor program helps me know myself better and get more prepared for the future. I believe it would be one of the most unforgettable experiences during these four years in NYUSH.



### **Mentee: Yexi Wang (NYU Shanghai '22)**

Yexi Wang is a sophomore majoring in Business and Finance and interested in Biology. She would like to work in the Pharmaceutical/Financial industry after graduation. She is looking forward to hearing advice from mentors about how to balance major concentration and personal interest.



### **Mentor: Derrick Miu (Stern MBA '03)**

Derrick is currently working at Merck & Co. Inc. and has over 22 years of experience in the pharmaceutical industry spanning the 3 largest markets US, Japan and China. He completed his Bachelors of Science from Columbia University and his Masters of Business Administration from New York University.



### **Q: What you have learned from your mentor that you think other students could benefit from hearing as well?**

The first thing is that the art of finding what you love is more like doing a subtraction instead of doing an addition.

As a sophomore majoring in Business and Finance, I am worried about my future career path and stressed about finding an internship. Meanwhile, I still possessed a questioning attitude towards whether I should pursue Finance as a career in the future.

After I expressed my concerns with my mentor, he pointed it out that finding things appealing to us is a long process and there is no need to worry too much about it for now.

What matters for college students is to try to develop our overall skills as much as possible through trying different things. Derrick mentions how his working experience in Japan helped him to realize the significance of focusing on his "hard skills" as well as making efforts to develop "soft skills".

Back then, he was responsible for strategic initiatives and business development. Thus, he needed to interact with other departments as well. Other departments might misunderstand his points due to imprecise expressions or different specialized fields.

Therefore, "soft skills" are very crucial. Good communication not only helps to increase work efficiency but also contributes to developing

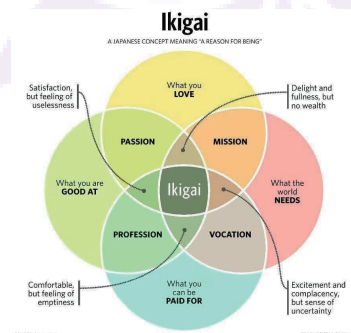
our own overall skills. His story triggered my thoughts.

Sometimes, we have to do something which we are not good at in order to achieve something we want. Stepping out of comfort zones and keeping trying to do something new helps us to figure out what we are good at and what we need to improve. Eventually, we are able to find fields we are really passionate about.

The second thing is the importance of distinguishing what we are good at from what we love.

I told my mentor that I choose Finance as my major because I think it's good for my future career path. Meanwhile, I want to minor in Biology because I am interested in research on heritable diseases.

However, I don't know how to balance my major and my interest. After hearing from me, Derrick shared a picture of "Ikigai" with me.



He let me think about what I can be paid for from things you are good at and things I love. Biology seems to be not really related to Finance,

however, the combination of these two areas can be quite interesting, such as pharmaceutical financial investment or medical industry.

We don't need to choose one field that shapes our futures. The point is we keep trying to combine new things in different ways in order to figure out a way in which we could apply our talent perfectly.

## Mentee: Yiyue Wang (NYU Shanghai '22)

Yiyue is an NYU Shanghai sophomore who is considering taking a double major in Finance and Social Science. She developed an interest in law since high school but still hesitates about the decision of going to a US law school. With this program, she would like to learn more about the legal industry.

## Mentor: Yun Zhou (Law '01)

Yun Zhou is the partner of Zhonglun Law Firm and the head of M&A department at the same time. He received legal education in both PRC and US, which enables him to be an expert in cross-border legal issues.



### Q: What impressed you the most from your mentor?

My mentor's truthfulness impressed me a lot, which I believe originated from his expertise and rich life experience.

My mentor did not cater to my perception and expectation of the world, and instead, he insisted on revealing the reality to me, whether it is bright or brutal.

I appreciate his honesty because it is of my best interest to know these facts as early as possible, and

hardly will anyone in his position be willing to share this life advice with a young and inexperienced college student like me.

Moreover, my mentor can always point out the problem with my thinking and guide me with practical suggestions that encourage me to find my own answer.

For instance, instead of telling me what qualities would be preferred by employers, he motivated me to think by myself, and we then started a much engaging discussion rather than merely a Q&A interview.

### Q: What's something you would like to share with other students?

One critical thing I learned from my mentor is to know my spot.

Knowing my spot means that I should understand my strengths and weaknesses compared to others, and thus I could utilize my strengths and form my unique value.

Although I did not study law in Chinese universities, my strength would be my proficiency in English, my major, and my multi-cultural experience in NYU Shanghai. Therefore, I would still have golden opportunities that could fit my spot and made me stand out.

Another aspect of knowing my spot means that I should not engage myself too much in thinking about things that have not yet happened. For instance, my concerns about internships in law firms will only become meaningful if I have passed the bar exam.



Otherwise, it will only be a waste of time and energy to be worried about things that will never happen.

Other than knowing my spot, another thing I learned from my mentor is that I should not always think from my own perspective.

He reminds me that people keep saying what they want, but if everybody keeps extracting what they want, nobody could end up achieving their goal. Instead, he proposed that we could only get what we want by giving others what they want.

I personally find this a profound philosophy that requires lifetime practice, so I will keep his words in mind, and I will always remind myself to put myself in others' shoes and be more willing to give.



### **Mentee: Yining Wei (NYU Shanghai '22)**

Yining Wei is a sophomore majoring in Finance and Social Science (psychology). She is interested in going to a law school in the future and would like to know more about the industry before making the final decision.

### **Mentor: Jie Zhu (Law' 06)**

Jie Zhu is a corporate lawyer in the Shanghai office of Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati. Jie majored in electrical engineering as an undergraduate at Tsinghua University. He quit his Ph.D. study in computer science at Carnegie Mellon University to enroll in NYU's School of Law in 2003.



#### **Q: What's something you would like to share with other students?**

In our meeting, Mr. Zhu and I talked about the hiring standard of large law firms and explained how a US licensed lawyer works in China, which was my biggest concern about pursuing law at that time.

According to Mr. Zhu, in the second fall semester of law school, each school will hold an on campus interview where law firms select interns for the next summer mainly based on the student's academic performance in the first year.

Most students will get a return offer after this summer internship. Most of the Chinese students take bar exams in the US and practice in the US at first.

Then some of them go to the Chinese office of foreign law firms in Hong Kong, Shanghai or Beijing. They aren't Chinese licensed lawyers, but they can still work here.

#### **Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?**

During our interaction, I am impressed by the strong curiosity Mr. Zhu holds.

In his social media posts, he often expresses critical opinions and questions on society and daily issues that people are too accustomed to ask about why.

Based on such critical thinking, he goes to other resources to find out the answer. For example, for lots of people, attention to coronavirus stops at panic and focusing on the newly reported cases only. However, Mr. Zhu went to articles about the principles of the forecast model, learned about the logic of expert opinions and tried to generate his own opinions critically.

I was surprised when viewing his social media. Nowadays many people tend to focus on their own life only and I know lots of senior professionals who are workaholic and don't pay large attention to life other than work.

I believe only people who have a strong passion for life can generate such interest. I admire this curiosity

and I am motivated by it too.

**Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the program?**

Law school is not a common choice at NYU Shanghai.

In the path of pursuing law school, I feel lost from time to time because of the lack of information.

Thanks to the Executive Mentor Program, I get the chance to communicate with Mr. Jie Zhu and learn much insight into the legal service industry.

What's more, interaction with Mr. Zhu builds me a role model both in career and life. Moreover, thanks to the CDC career coach Ji, who is responsible for this program too, I gained skills in how to communicate with senior professionals and networking with alumni. I believe these skills are of great significance in my future career path.



**Mentee: Ming Xian  
(NYU Shanghai '22)**

Ming is a sophomore majoring in business and finance. She is now preparing for her career path. Still unsure about which specific discipline in business and finance she is interested in, Ming applied for the mentor program for advice.



**Mentor: Theodore Low  
(Stern' 03)**

Teddy is currently Director at Nippon Paint China Holdings where he sources, analyzes and structures investments in the China chemicals space. Teddy has had a variety of experiences in both an advisory and principal investments capacity in NYC and Asia.



**Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the whole academic year?**

The most useful thing I got out of this program is the career insights

and major suggestions. I just declared my major, which is Business and Finance, at the time I met Teddy.

I am very unclear about what specific area of finance I might be interested in and also what opportunities I should take to enrich my experience.

During our first meeting, we spent most of our time talking about general tips like taking internships and courses to figure out what I may have interest in, as well as what Teddy is basically doing every day in his position of a director professional in strategy and business development.

**Q: What's impressed you most from your mentor?**

Teddy is a very easy-going and caring person, and he is also interested in knowing more about my life as a current college student.

We exchanged our life pieces at random times, which enables me to feel that we are building a long-lasting trustworthy relationship and more like friends.

From his daily life I could also glimpse the daily life of business people, which I found interesting to know.

**Q: What's something you would like to share with other students?**

I remembered the moment when we were talking about the pros and cons of pursuing a master's degree after graduation.

Teddy suggested that I go for a job directly if there's a good offer because he values working experience more than theoretical knowledge.

He reminded me that the lack of business insights might be a weakness while finding jobs, and those could only be accumulated through working in the real business world.



### **Mentee: Yajie Xiao (NYU Shanghai '22)**

Yajie Xiao is a sophomore majoring in Data Science. She is passionate about health sciences as well as environmental studies and wishes to employ her analytical skills in the field of public health. With the intention to explore the real dynamics of medical institutions in China, she joined the Alumni Executive Mentor Program and paired up with Leon Huang.

### **Mentor: Leon Junliang Huang (GSAS '11 )**

Leon is currently working for Bayer Pharma because he is very interested in the healthcare industry. As a documentary filmmaker, entrepreneur and marathon runner, Junliang is energetic and full of passion.



#### **Q: What you have learned from your mentor that you think other students could benefit from hearing as well?**

When I asked him what he wishes to know before he starts his office life, Leon told me to keep a journal of my work performance as well as progress, and very importantly, record the times when I feel I am being wronged by others.

I feel surprised as well as touched

when he said it is important to protect yourself in the workplace.

Leon also reassured my anxiety about going to grad school or work by evaluating the pros and cons respectively. And he said to me that no matter what choices I make about my future career, the most reliable source is always myself, there is no better way to get a glimpse of what is actually going on in that industry you are interested in than getting internships.

He also encouraged me that employers would not hire me because of my major but for my own profession. My own experience tells me the answer that is closest to my heart.

#### **Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?**

Three significant qualities of Leon that most impress me are his sense of humor, guarded optimism, and adventurer spirit.

Leon has always been open about his thoughts and experience. Small talks, as well as jokes, were involved in our conversations since day one.

Leon is unlike any of the stereotypes about the successful businessman with a very fast pace of life. He enjoys a variety of activities other than work and one of them is going for a run late at night. Plus, he is surprisingly humorous. One of the reasons we get along well is we both like to crack a few jokes once in a while.

Leon always encourages me to grasp any opportunities that are

out there, so be a doer!

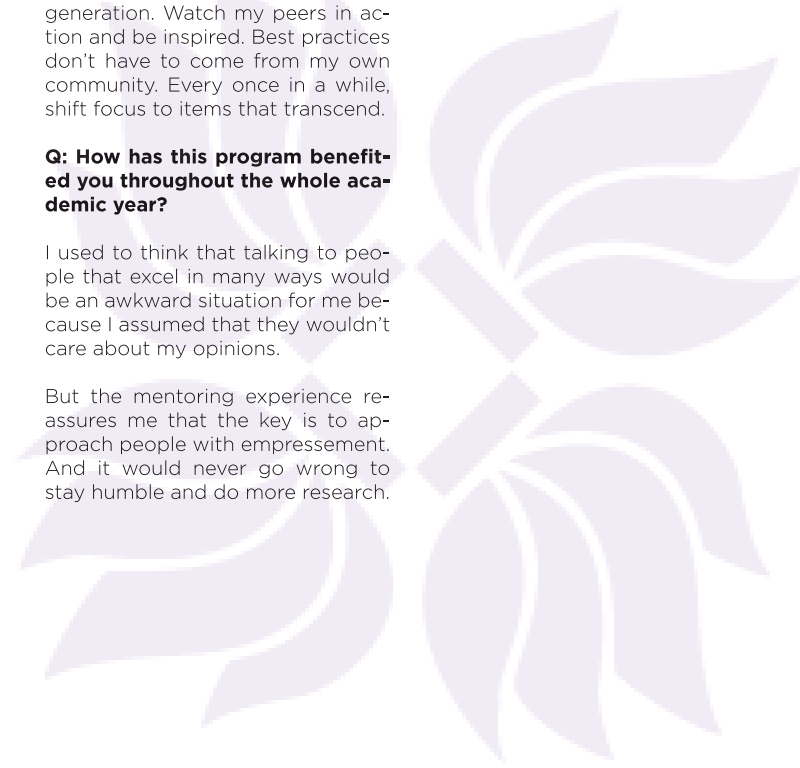
Leon always reminded me that telling me that the most precious thing I have at my disposal is time and I should be able to use it wisely.

Leon also reminds me that I am always competing with my entire generation. Watch my peers in action and be inspired. Best practices don't have to come from my own community. Every once in a while, shift focus to items that transcend.

**Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the whole academic year?**

I used to think that talking to people that excel in many ways would be an awkward situation for me because I assumed that they wouldn't care about my opinions.

But the mentoring experience reassures me that the key is to approach people with empressment. And it would never go wrong to stay humble and do more research.



**Mentee: Jingzhi Xu  
(NYU Shanghai '22)**

Jingzhi is a sophomore majoring in social science. With the help of the Executive Mentor Program, She explored her interest in filmmaking and made some progress.



**Mentor: Julliet Pan  
(TSOA '05)**

Julliet Pan is the founder of the SHE&JUL Films Productions and Media Company. Honored as one of the top 100 women in China by Insider magazine, Julliet works as a distinguished director and experienced film and television producer, and as a leading media professional, philanthropist and entrepreneur in the creative industry.



**Q: What's something you would like to share with other students?**

Unlike Julliet who has determined to pursue filmmaking as an undergraduate and is persistent in doing it, filmmaking is more like an imagination for me.

I'm not sure if I will actually pursue this path. I certainly have the passion to become a filmmaker, but I don't have the chance right now to be a filmmaking major and probably will not learn filmmaking in graduate school afterward.

But does that mean I cannot benefit from her suggestions? No. She gave me much understanding of my current thoughts and plans. I learned that even though I'm not on a path going straight forward to filmmaking, it doesn't mean that I will lose the chance to pursue it.

I can also choose to do a film graduate program even when I'm already in another career.

For the current stage, the most important thing is to learn as much as I can and experience as much as I can. Then, the path will become clearer.

Also, filmmaking highly depends on the filmmaker's personal experience and understanding of the world. My major, Social Science, can actually help build the foundation for future filmmaking.

After talking with her, I started to be calmer about my path instead of always worrying about what I could gain or lose. What is important is that I should focus on what I'm doing right now. Everything leads a way.



**Q: What change does your mentor bring you?**

Under Julliet's encouragement last semester, I gave myself a try on short film shooting.

In winter vacation, I shot a 12-minute short film using a screenplay that I wrote last semester.

It was a one-day, extremely tiring shooting experience. But all the efforts were worthwhile. This was the first complete storytelling film that I've ever shot and I gained actual experience of shooting long conversations.

If you don't try, you'll never know. I learned that all the dreams in my mind should not be mere imagination but should be put into practice.

Then I can know the difficulty and potentials and whether I really like the experience.



**Mentee: Zhiheng Yang  
(NYU Shanghai '22)**

Zhiheng is an NYU Shanghai sophomore majoring in Honors Math. With this program, he would like to know more about future career paths and build connections with both professionals and excellent peers.

**Mentor: Zhen Ji  
(CIMS '97)**

Zhen Ji is the managing director of Kohlberg Kravis Roberts, focusing on investment. Zhen majored in computer science when he was in NYU and switched to the financial industry afterward.



**Q: What's something you would like to share with other students?**

One thing my mentor has always emphasized is that one has to try different things, instead of limiting himself to a fixed career path at the beginning.

Trying different things means you need to do what others have not done or dare not do before. In a constantly changing environment nowadays, new jobs are created and old ones are replaced at a tremendous rate.

Thus, it will be hard for someone

to succeed if he simply sticks to the convention. My mentor used to work at Microsoft after graduating from NYU majoring in computer science.

But later he switched to the financial industry even though he was not a professional in finance back then. He wanted to challenge himself to do something new and it was after he tried that he discovered his passion in finance.

Therefore, in order to find what you are truly passionate about, one needs to be open to various options.

It really inspires me because I feel like oftentimes, I am reluctant to step outside my comfort zone, for fear that I may fail.

But my mentor encourages me that I have to take risks sometimes. Young people like me still have a lot of time to decide what to do in the future.

There's really nothing to lose for us, so why not take some risks and explore fields which you think you are not good at? It does not matter what you are learning now, any career path is open to you as long as you have the passion.

**Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the program?**

Even though it has only been a few months since I joined this program, I have learned much more than I have expected before.

The best thing about this mentor program is that it offers us with

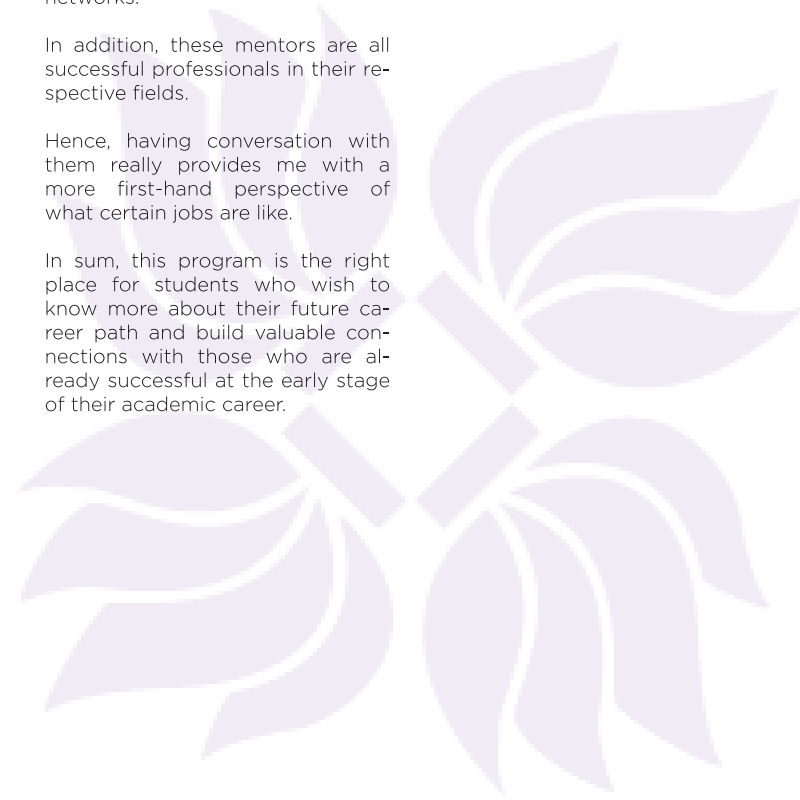
plenty of resources which are hard for students to obtain by themselves.

Meeting all these amazing mentors during the welcome dinner is a great opportunity to expand social networks.

In addition, these mentors are all successful professionals in their respective fields.

Hence, having conversation with them really provides me with a more first-hand perspective of what certain jobs are like.

In sum, this program is the right place for students who wish to know more about their future career path and build valuable connections with those who are already successful at the early stage of their academic career.



### **Mentee: Yuhan Yao (NYU Shanghai '22)**

Yuhan Yao is a sophomore majoring in Data Science and minoring in Mathematics. She plans to go for a Data Science Master's program and is very interested in the tech and Internet industry. She joined the Mentor Program for guidance and advice.



### **Mentor: Callum Li (Tandon MA '12)**

Callum Li currently works as the China Service Manager of Airbnb, responsible for business strategy and service design. Li completed his Master's degree at NYU in 2012, majoring in Management Science and concentrating in Project Management.



#### **Q: What's something you would like to share with other students?**

One of the first pieces of advice Callum gave me is to find an industry and a position that I truly love.

His own career path is a perfect example and inspired me to think back on what I have done to find my true passion career-wise.

Callum decided to change his major after interning at Apple during undergraduate studies. He realized he preferred management rather than finance and went to NYU Tandon afterwards to study Management Science.

As for me, I have always been fascinated by science and technology advances and I major in STEM so I believe the Internet and tech industry would be ideal for me to try out.

Callum pointed out that there's no need to panic if I do not have much internship experience. The most important skill is to channel past experience, whether it is extracurricular activities or research projects, and make connections to the new position I am applying for.

#### **Q: What impressed you the most from your mentor?**

What impresses most about Callum would be how willing he is to give back to the NYU community and his constant pursuit of new challenges.

He has participated in the Mentor Program since year one and also attended Online Career Panel talk as a guest speaker to share his experience and advice.

He is always ready to discuss questions and problems that I have and always gives helpful feedback.

Moreover, Callum is always seeking

opportunities to better himself actively.

Everytime he decides to switch to a new position or a new company, he takes up new challenges. It was enlightening to know how and why Callum made the choices in his career path, to learn what is more valuable and more important to an individual in the path of success and when to jump out of comfort zone and take on challenges.

I am lucky to have a mentor and friend who is intrinsically motivated and yearning for self-improvement. I hope this mentorship and friendship is going to last longer into the future. And as I gain more experience and insight into the industries, I will probably have a whole new understanding of what Callum told me.

**Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the whole academic year?**

This program has offered me an opportunity to know an alumnus with similar University experience and has much more experience in the industries than I am.

Getting to know an alumnus who is in the industry I am interested in really helps me map out my future career plans. I can take advice from someone who has been done the same road before and is really willing to help younger students.

The Alumni Program is a great opportunity to meet new people, students and mentors alike, to learn from the more experience and to pause and think about our own

career envisions. After months of interactions, I have some to know more about my mentor's stories and where my passion potentially lies.

Now, I have a clearer idea about what my plans are in the following two years at NYU Shanghai and perhaps a rough idea about the future beyond that.

**Mentee: Ling'er Zhang  
(NYU Shanghai '22)**

Ling'er Zhang is a sophomore majoring in Business and Finance. She is interested in different aspects of the finance field, especially accounting and auditing, and would like to work in this industry in the future. She joined the Mentor Program for industry inside experience and guidance.

**Mentor: Felicia Li  
(Stern '95)**

Felicia is currently a senior technical partner in Deloitte Shanghai Global Capital Market Group. She joined Deloitte U.S. in 1998, and has worked in Deloitte offices in both the U.S. and China. Felicia holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting from New York University. She is a licensed CPA in the United States, EMI Music, and MGM Studios.



**Q: What have you learned from your mentor that you think other students could benefit from hearing as well?**

My biggest takeaway from my mentor is the importance of communication.

Although my mentor Felicia works for the accounting industry, which seems more relevant with numbers,

she insists on highlighting the skill of contacting other people.

I asked Felicia whether accounting will be replaced by artificial intelligence. She replied no, because an accountant needs to tell the person in charge of the company about their financial condition, what future risks and benefits they may encounter, and convince them to do several measurements.

This process requires a high devotion to communicating with different types of people, which can't be easily accomplished by AI.

She explained that compared to dealing with numbers which can be done by computers, the value of accountants and auditors lies in talking with people and convincing them about your decisions.

Moreover, throughout the conversation I had with her, I learned that this communication skill is also beneficial under the current coronavirus strike. With the restriction of working on-site, the original face-to-face teamwork has shifted to the remote working, which adds difficulty to the communication within a group.

Therefore, being able to be engaged with other people actively is more crucial than ever before. Extending that to ourselves as students, communication skill is also of great importance as it builds up our network and affects our future development.

**Q: What impressed you the most about your mentor?**

The thing that impressed me the most about my mentor is her dedication to her career and her understanding of this industry.

Unlike many other mentors, my mentor Felicia has dived into the accounting/ auditing/ consulting industry since she graduated from the accounting major. When I asked whether she had considered changing to another industry, she explained that “The essence of choosing different industries and jobs is choosing your favourite working style of a firm”.

Therefore, if you already take pleasure in one working style, it's not mandatory or necessary for you to try other industries. It is also the reason for her to keep working in the same industry, which is known as a busy and tiring industry for decades.

**Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the whole academic year?**

Speaking of the personal development from this mentor program, I would say the improving skill of networking is my most significant improvement.

I remember back to the first meeting we had before the welcome dinner, I was frightened of all the coming mentors and the conversation we were supposed to have with them because they are all awesome people in different fields.

Till this semester's online meeting with my mentor, with enough preparation and practice, I was able to talk with my mentor more natu-

rally and professionally. I was able to synthesis my thoughts with her claim and then lead to the next topic fluently, which is far beyond my expectation.

**Mentee: Xuyou Zhang  
(NYU Shanghai '22)**

Xuyou is a sophomore majoring in Business and Finance. He is interested in the finance and consulting industry. Unsure about how to initiate the post-graduate career path, he paired with Mr Danny Bao to get firsthand industry insight and guidance.



**Mentor: Danny Bao  
(Stern MBA '01)**

Danny has 20 years of professional experience, with 8 years of US financial service and 12 years in Asian Real Estate and Investment Management. As the founder of HJY Capital, he currently manages a hedge fund investing in beneficiaries of China's new urbanization trend.



**Q: What's something you would**

**like to share with other students?**

Throughout the program, Danny helped me sift and winnow through options and opportunities that lie ahead and some of my concerns may also apply to most business students and I'd like to share them with my fellow classmates.

First, Danny shared his experience as a recruiter and he said what you actually have command is better than the bluffs on your resume. Simply pursuing a high GPA, or trying to pass as many as possible standardized tests such as CFA are not as important as truly understanding the contents and knowing how to apply them to the real world.

Second, Danny emphasized the importance of networking. He encouraged me to talk to alumni working in different fields and force myself to ask questions to hiring managers in career fairs to get a general sense of what this certain area may look like.

Third, how should I choose the very first job after graduation. Danny told me while entering big name companies indeed is a very good way to develop ones career path, it is also very rewarding to target at small firms because usually in a small firm you can learn more and it is easier to leverage this experience for future jobs as you will lay a more solid foundation in a small firm.

**Q: What impressed you the most from your mentor?**

Danny is a mentor that is really easy to approach. During my first online



meeting with Danny, he told me that he thought that being a mentor is both a humbling task and an important responsibility.

What impressed me most is that every time I raise a question, Danny will first ask what thoughts I have and then give me his understanding and suggestions. In contrast to my initial conjecture, Danny's mentoring is more like an equal dialogue between a current and previous NYU student rather than a lecture.

Moreover, in every meeting, Danny and I would discuss current events happening around the globe and I am always glad to hear the insights of a financial professional. For example, Danny shared his opinions on the 2019 Hong Kong protesting, the COVID-19 and their respective impact on the financial industry as well as career opportunities and challenges.

**Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the whole academic year?**

Acting as a mentee this year has allowed me to fulfill my desire to learn from a mature and successful well-being while maintaining my own balance.

As a mentee, I've gained a broader knowledge about the growing path (both personal and career) that an NYU alumni walk through. It has led me to feel more deeply connected, not only to my mentor but to NYU and for that, I am grateful.



**Mentee: Canyu Zhu  
(NYU Shanghai' 22)**

Canyu Zhu is a sophomore majoring in Honors Mathematics and Data Science. He has strong interest in the big data industry and is willing to either explore a career in financial industry or data analysis.

**Mentor: William Hsieh  
(STERN MBA '00)**

Canyu Zhu is a sophomore majoring in Ho Will has worked mostly in the Greater China entertainment field for the past 20+ years. He's currently the VP/GM, Corporate & Digital Development for SPACE, a premium wellness startup. Previously, he has held management roles for Electronic Arts, Sony Music, EMI Music, and MGM Studios.



**Q: What's something you would like to share with other students?**

In our meeting, the topic Will and I discussed the most was about how to balance my passion and my real career path.

In NYUSH we have the great chance to choose what we want to do and who we want to be freely but at the same time, it also brings a risk that we might be trapped in our illusion and not see what is really going on.

I identify myself as a person who has a wide range of interests in science, education, finance, art which

are totally different areas. So, what Will suggested is that I should find a field that is the best to be a "career" and "make a living".

It doesn't mean that we should just "face the truth and give up our dream" but to realize our passion in a smarter and more efficient way.

**Q: What impressed you the most from your mentor?**

The first impression was that Will was a "young" entrepreneur and a respectful friend. I mean the way he communicated with me, his thoughts, perspectives of news, and his lifestyle are all very "fashion-forward".

Our conversation was based on an equal status that I asked for his advice and he also learned something from me at the same time. I feel that this might be one key that leads to Will's success: always be humble and learn from new things.

Besides, Will has the "entrepreneur-temperament", every time when I mentioned some vague thoughts and ideas, he would help me to put them into details and tell me the cons and pros of what I was thinking about. I think this is another important thing that Will taught me to make a successful career.

**Q: How has this program benefited you throughout the program?**

This program helped me think about my future and career at an early stage.

Both Career Development Center (CDC) and Will offer me great sug-

gestions. Now I have a clear idea that I will possibly try to apply for a master program in Mathematical Financial Engineering and will also be open to great job opportunities.

CDC also offers me various guidance of how to find and apply for those opportunities. So, I want to say my special and sincere thanks to this program and I hope this program can continue and be even better in the future.

